DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 107 276 IR 002 020

AUTHOR	Fingland, Geoffrey; And Others
TITLE	Library Files; Open or Closed to Readers?
INSTITUTION	American Newspaper Publishers Association Foundation, Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE	Jun 74
NOTE	17p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Special Library Association (Toronto, Ontario, June 9-13, 1974)
EDRS PRICE	MF-$0.76 HC-$1.58 PLUS POSTAGE
DESCRIPTORS	Conference Reports; *Information Retrieval; Information Storage; *Library Circulation; *Library Collections; Library Reference Services; Library Services; Microforms; *Newspapers; Special Libraries
IDENTIFIERS	*Newspaper Clipping Files

ABSTRACT

At a Newspaper Division meeting of the Special Libraries Association four newspaper librarians presented the pros and cons of closed clipping files. The major point in favor of closed files was that they are not as subject to loss and misfiling as are openfiles. However, with closed files close communication is needed between librarian and reporter in order to provide reporters and feature writers with the most relevant information. It was noted that at some newspaper libraries the lack of staff dictates open files, which makes eliciting the cooperation of reporters in signing out and returning files very important. Other libraries try to provide a research service as well as information retrieval functions. The discussion following the formal presentation covered problems of overdue materials, circulation methods, copying policies, photo files, and microforms. (LS)

ED107276

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

Newspaper Division Papers

SLA Convention

June 9-13, 1974

Toronto, Canada

Library Files
Open or Closed to Readers?

Moderator

Joseph F. McCarthy
New York (N.Y.) Daily News

Panel by

Geoffrey Fingland
Boston (Mass.) Christian Science Monitor

Ernest Perez
Houston (Tex.) Chronicle

Lou Thomas
Baton Rouge (La.) State Times & Morning Advocate

Edited and Reproduced by:

American Newspaper Publishers Association Foundation
P.O. Box 17407
Dulles International Airport
Washington, D.C. 20041

IR 001 080

Joseph McCarthy: At this session we are going to discuss file security--or open or closed files. Why should the files be open or closed? What criteria should be used in making this decision? All of this, of course, hinges on whether the librarian has a choice in the matter.

Today we have four librarians on the panel--two for open files and two for closed. Each of us will give our opinion on this subject, and then we'll go to the floor for questions, answers and discussion. If you have any questions, please wait until all four panelists have spoken. Please give your name and newspaper and speak loudly.

I'll start the ball rolling. My name is Joe McCarthy and I am the librarian of The New York Daily News, which has the largest newspaper circulation in the United States. I am for closed files.

I have been with The News for 42 years, have been chief librarian since 1965, and, with the exception of time out for U.S. Navy Service during World War II, all of that time was spent in The News Library.

As far as I am concerned, file security is the second most important aspect of trying to run a newspaper library. We all want our files to be used, and used extensively. What we are putting in those files is going to be useful, if not today, then at some future date.

However, we must be very sure that what we put in those files is in the proper place, where it can be found when needed. And, just as important, it must be returned to its proper place in the files after it has been used.

I do not think that anyone except a trained librarian should remove material from the files, or put it back, for many reasons.

First, I feel that most reporters, writers, or editors don't know enough about the files to get the information they need. They might miss something that could be very important to a story.

Secondly, I do not think that these persons, if permitted to go to the files, would be as careful as a librarian in refiling.

If they are permitted to help themselves, will they always fill out the required forms? Sometimes they may be rushed or they may forget.

Another important point is that with open files, the librarian is not in complete charge of his or her department. This is not good as far as prestige is concerned, for the librarian or his staff.

To me, these are the most important reasons for having closed files. There are many more.

Let me tell you how we do things at The News.

First of all, no one (and I do mean no one) even comes into the library. The door is locked and we utilize a counter to accomodate our customers.

Before the librarian will even go to the files for any material, he must receive a requisition slip, and it must be filled out completely. Nothing, not even a single half column cut will leave the room unless we have that slip.

The material is checked back at the end of the working day. Normally all material must be returned each day. Exceptions are made for feature writers, but for very few others.

If material has not been returned, the slip is put in an alphabetical "Hold" file. At the end of the week, if the material has still not been returned, we send the "charged" person a blue form.

Usually the person will reply to the blue slip. But if not, after a reasonable time, a second blue slip is sent to him. This one is plainly marked "second notice." If there is no reply to the second notice, a memo is sent to the managing editor. I have not had to send him a memo of this type in over three years, so I guess the system works pretty well.

I know that this means the library must be staffed 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and that some of you cannot afford that luxury. I would suggest, however, that you work toward that goal. If that's not possible, have one person in the city room be responsible for removing material from the library during the times it is not staffed. An office clerk could be trained and, as an added incentive, he could be given a small raise. This, incidentally, is a good way of getting some trained and experienced replacements in the library when you need them.

I will answer any questions after the other three panelists have spoken. Thank you.

Our next two panelists, Ernest Perez of the Houston Chronicle and Lou Thomas of the Baton Rouge State Times and Morning and Sunday Advocate, have collaborated on their presentation. They are for open files. Ernest will speak first, then Lou, and then back to Ernest.

Ernest Perez:

When Homer Martin asked me to participate in this panel, I think he was looking for someone to speak for open files. He says that I'm for open files and, with a qualification, I am. I'm for open files because I haven't got enough personnel to close them. Homer said I should just talk about my operation, so that's what I'm going to do.

The Houston Chronicle has a combination of "open" and "closed" files, which seems to be what the editorial user wants. Emphasis is on teaching the file organization to the editorial staff, so they'll be able to get the simple, obvious material themselves.

I set up the new library quarters with two routes of access. The editorial staff can come in the front door and get library staff aid, or they can come in the staff entrance and get what they need themselves. If a staff member has used a clipping file called "Texas Constitutional Convention" eight to ten times, he knows it's under "Texas" and not "Constitutional." And he can save his time and ours by getting it himself.

We in the library are the creators and organizers of the information file. Our job is to make access as easy as possible. I can try to make our system as consistent and self-explanatory as possible, with labels and cross-references, card catalogs, Linedexes and guide pamphlets, but my aim is to get the library staff to act as a "service department" to the editorial department. We haven't got the staff size or the educational level necessary for a full research service operation, but the staff is there to help when editorial staffers need the help. Even if I had five bachelor's-level library assistants, or five master's degree librarians with subject specialties, I'd still make specific fact research help optional.

There are editorial people that pretty well know the files in their subject area, or who can work with just a hint from one of the assistants. And there are other people who would like us to do the majority of the file or even specific fact location for them. We can't force it either way. We can't arbitrarily say "Get it yourself" since we have library assistants to help them as well as to assist me. But we can't keep users totally closed out of our files because we haven't got the staff to get everything for everyone.

That's generally the condition of my library, and a description of my operation. Now it's Lou Thomas' turn to talk about her operation.

Lou Thomas:

When Joe said we had collaborated, he wasn't kidding, because you'd think we had written these papers together. Our operations are very similar, although Ernest's is larger than mine.

I think I may have a rather idealistic view of the newspaper library. I do not like labeling the library as a storage and retrieval facility. I prefer to think of it as the research arm of the news gathering editorial department. This may not be the way it really is, but it is the way I would like to view it. So, I strive for a cooperative team effort, and if at all possible, try to work with the reporters in assembling the necessary background information for writing stories. This goes beyond the storage and retrieval concept.

It is possible that closed libraries (or those with counter service) create a type of psychological barrier that places the library staff in the position of taking orders and handing out material with very little knowledge of how or why the material is to be used. With a closer working arrangement with the news staff, the librarian may be aware of more information available in books, pamphlets, other libraries or from individual sources. With good exchange between the two groups each one becomes more aware of the other's problems. The library staff becomes more news conscious, which certainly pays off in dividends for the library and, in the long run, for the news staff and the paper.

Having ready access to the files can, and in many cases does, give the reporters a feeling of joint ownership and joint responsibility for the library files. They see the information as really their tool to use rather than the librarian's to lend. The librarian is seen less as an alien or strict custodian who may refuse them access to the information they need. Some of this feeling may go back to school days.

Our operation is similar to the Houston Chronicle's; we are open to reporters by necessity. Our staff is too small to give counter service and we aren't staffed all the hours the library is open. We have to concentrate on a good atmosphere of cooperation to survive. If I were given the choice of closing the library to reporters, I would have to think about it for a long time before changing our present policy. I know the pit-falls--the stolen files, misplaced clippings, etc. We know the large libraries may have to resort to more elaborate record keeping, but I think I would favor an "open door policy" even with more records on each reporter's use.

Some reporters would like having "silver tray service" with everything brought to their desks. They don't mind imposing on library personnel, with inadequate instructions as to what they need, and they don't appear to be aware that they have asked for the unreasonable. I think it is part of the library personnel's function to show reporters how to find information for themselves. This doesn't mean that you can't or won't help when they need help, especially when they are rushed for time. Give what is needed, cheerfully and quickly, but at the same time reserve the right to hand them a book or file to research for themselves when they can.

Back to Ernest, who has more ideas on educating the reporters to resources.

Ernest Perez:

One valuable part of the library service to the editorial department is providing an access to outside resources. I'm trying to build up a habit both in the library staff and in the reporters who use the library the most, of using any outside help that will make their jobs easier. This can be as library-stereotyped as getting books and photocopies on interlibrary-loan; or it can be as far-sighted as developing the habit of informing ourselves about outside libraries, subject specialist groups and organizations that can provide our people with information. Valuable sources for us, for instance, are a directory of local professional associations and the State Library's directory of special library collections. These also give us a clue to concentrations of specialists. Outside reference can be as simple as calling the Esso Production Research Library with a question about the meaning of the term "fractional distillation," so that we can put it into English for a copy editor. It can mean searching through the last year or two of our own Reader's Guide for a reporter who's going to go over to the public library for some research on obscenity and pornography. Outside reference can also consist of putting someone interested in the possibility of a recurrence of a 1929-

style Depression in touch with a couple of economists and historians specializing in the study of the Depression at a local university. Academic librarians, by the way, can give you near-instant information on who the local authority on X, Y, or Z is, or who is doing a paper or dissertation on X, Y, or Z.

Joseph McCarthy: Thank you, Ernest. Thank you, Lou. Our next panelist is Geoffrey Fingland from the Christian Science Monitor.

Geoffrey Fingland: When I began to write this paper, I couldn't see any argument at all for having open files. I could only see the advantages of having closed files. But you can all see from what's gone before that there's a good bit to be said for open files. A lot depends on the kind of newspaper you have and the times you have to be open. But it is still my opinion that closed files are best.

Security of the Files

It is essential to have proper charge-out systems; otherwise there is every possibility that envelopes and individual clips will be lost.

If the files are open, you must rely on the reporters charging out their own clips and envelopes. Just think how often, even with closed files, a reporter wants a clip and asks if he can "just take it without charging it," to show the news editor, or copy desk. "I will bring it straight back." Then he gets side-tracked for an hour or two, and forgets it. If busy reporters are left to do their own charging, clips and envelopes frequently get lost.

That's how it seems to me. But I know from talking to other librarians that, in practice, some of them fare better than this.

Our system of charging out file material involves placing an "out" card in the space from which the envelope is taken. On the "out" card is written the title of the envelope, the date and the name of the reporter. This leads the next researcher to the person who has the file on his desk. But we also make another charge on a form which is headed with the title of the envelope. The usual details are added and the form is filed in a separate drawer under titles. This enables one of our clerks to check through once a week to see what files are overdue.

Because Monitor reporters write so many in-depth stories, they may need to keep a file on their desks for a week or more. We really need a way of chasing these files down. Without this second charge-out record we could not do this.

The other day, a reporter came bursting in on deadline and asked to see a list of Supreme Court decisions. "Way back," he said. As he was heading off into the Congressional Quarterly Index, it occurred to me to ask him just what he really wanted. "Oh," he said, "All I want is the decision in the case of so-and-so, versus so-and-so." Left to his own devices he would have taken 10 minutes, but it took me only 60 seconds to pull what he wanted out of the Supreme Court envelope.

We have a system in the biographical file for people who only have one or two clips to their name. There are thousands of these so we do not make a separate envelope for each. We file them in alphabetical batches in a blue folder in the mainstream of envelopes. Inside these blue folders the clips are filed alphabetically by name. It is a tricky job to pull out the right one. It is the sort of thing that we in the library have to have the patience to do. I have a feeling that with all the best will in the world, reporters would soon make a mess of these blue folders.

Time Limits

Monitor writers do so much background researching that we have a charge-out limit of two weeks, but clips must always be kept available on their desks for anyone else to use. City desk reporters and editors usually return their clips within 24 hours.

What do we do about those who don't return their clips after their first notice?

I usually start the warning system in a low key. The person in charge of returned clips issues the first notice when slips are 10 days old. If that produces nothing, the assistant librarian chases the clips down personally. And if that fails, I write a strong note in red ink, which, strangely enough, usually has the desired effect! If it didn't, I'd go to the reporter's division editor, the city editor, foreign editor, or American news editor. It has never been necessary to go further than that.

Joseph McCarthy: Thank you very much, Geoffrey. Now we'll take questions and discussions from the floor. Please stand, identify yourself, your newspaper and speak up. Address your question to whomever you want.

Sandy Hall, Tucson (Ariz.) Daily Star and Daily Citizen:

I'd like to direct my question to Ernie. I didn't feel as though you covered the whole question of the working area. What do you do when people who are delinquent come to return files?

Ernest Perez: Lou and I talked about this and to us it really didn't pertain to circulation. It pertained to access to the files. Our official access period is 24 hours. Realistically, I'd say it's about 3.6 days, or something like that. Most material is returned within a day or a day and a half. I don't really get worried about a file unless it's out for more than four days. At that point I start chasing it down because a staffer working on a feature or research usually has a specific need to keep a file out longer. We have posted a sign in the library which says if someone needs a file for more than 24 hours, they must specify this to us when the file is taken out. That way we get 95 percent of the material back on time.

One library I visited has the perfect solution. Nothing goes out of the library. The only thing that leaves the library is Xerox copies. And that's perfect, because while you might have $1,500 a year more on your Xerox bill. you will be paying for a file that is complete. If someone is going to use the file for background research and selection of material, that's no problem if you have the space and equipment in your library. He can sit right there and do his research and make his selection and copy the material. If he's not sure, he can go ahead and copy the material. You'll pay for it, but you'll have a more complete file.

We have overdue notice forms. We use them and get a pretty good return. I just call people or pick material up from their desks. As far as getting nastier--putting muscle on them--I haven't quite found a way to do that within the restrictions of a newspaper. The newspaper has hired people to do research and to be reporters. I haven't figured out how to deny them access to information and have the newspaper back me up.

Several things have gone through my mind. My first thought was to impose a flat money fine. But I can't do that. The newspaper management wouldn't go along with it. The only other thing I can think of, aside from preventing someone from coming in to the library, which is also forbidden, is to get the support of your managing editor and deny borrowing privileges to someone for a week or so. The person would have to use the material in the library, but that's his hassle because he created the difficulty. That's the only thing I can think of since you can't fine them and you can't cut off their borrowing privileges. What can you do? Hire a hit man?

Mary Lou Lathrop, Bell & Howell Newspaper Index:

Two questions for those with open files. When a reporter comes in to browse among the files, do you allow him to refile or do you require that he leave the material on top of the desk? And second, when they have browsability, how do you operate the checkout system? Do you place that responsibility on the reporters?

Lou Thomas: We get a confirmation. We do not let them refile. If they have time, they take care of their own checkout. If they're rushed, we don't bother them; we watch, and get up and do the checkout for them.

Ernest Perez: My system is about the same. We do help the reporters. If they want to browse or do research, we explain what kind of material we have and tell them where to look or we give them a list. On checkout, if they're in a mad rush and have to make it to the courthouse, we'll check material out for them. If not, they can just stop and sign their own names and that's it.

Questionner: Could you tell us the number of people on your staff?

Lou Thomas: I have four.

Joseph McCarthy: I have 22.

Ernest Perez: I have 10.

Questionner: And how many people do you serve?

Lou Thomas: Around 50.

Joseph McCarthy: We have about 1,000.

Ernest Perez: I'd estimate about 75.

Gayle Thompson, Miami (Fla.) News:

We have open files and I wish we didn't. We did an experiment: for two weeks we closed the files. We found it took us about 15 more hours each week with closed files. But during those two weeks, the reporters really loved it. I think we could provide better service with the files closed.

Ernest Perez: I have a comment for small libraries. We had a seminar for small newspaper libraries in Houston in March of 1973, and some of the people here today--Dave Rhydwen, Lou Thomas, Fran Barger--were there to help with the seminar.

I'd been wandering around through different cities in Texas at the time and visiting newspaper libraries. I saw one that had the most beautiful system of circulation control for a small library that I've ever seen. It was not much of a hassle for the reporter so that it had a pretty high rate of compliance; it was no hassle at all for the library, and it's a good idea for a small library.

They had a blackboard on the door as you exited. As a reporter walked out he wrote his name, what he had taken and the date. When he brought the material back, the entry on the board was erased. You could look up there and tell if some little thief had had something out for 18 weeks or for two days. The board served as a reminder to the reporter; the entry wasn't hidden away in a little file of checkout slips that were overdue. It was right there for all to see.

Questionner: Whether they are open or closed, do you ever allow files out of the building?

Answers: A chorus of noes, no ways, and nevers.

Anne Jennings, Newspaper Library Services:

(Spoke for about one minute, much of it inaudible. But the gist of what she said is that with the support of management and the proper approach to the users a voluntary signout system can be made to work. Here are the statements that could be understood.)

On voluntary signout, I think that the official attitude is important. When you have officials who support your position, it helps. Do a little bit of spade work among the staff. Explain to them that it is for their benefit that there is a signout system, that they themselves have a stake in maintaining the files, and you will find it easier, particularly when the boss supports this attitude. Rather than the library saying: "We ask that you sign out material," the executive editor or the managing editor or whoever is the boss says: "You will sign out material." Then they will sign out material.

Ernest Perez: I have two comments on that. My managing editor and editor-in-chief don't want to close our library files. The news editor does want to close our files. He says: "My God, you had this. Where is it? Why don't you close the files?"

The other thing is the Xerox machine I mentioned before. A lot of the availability of material, at least for us-because we do have the machine in the library and the slack time to make copies--comes from taking active material and duplicating it. And I mean duplicating it in numbered, ordered pages.

We had the Houston mass murders. I made 25 Xerox copies of that file for about four months (from the microfiche it was easy) and then I updated with hard copy clips. One went to the reporter who was covering the courthouse during that whole case to keep with him out there. We sent him two or three pages every day so that he never had to come back to the library and bother us at all. Another copy went to the city desk so they could take care of the copy and handle assignments and so on. The other 24 copies went for $25 each, so that it became profitable too.

Questionner: I'm new at this. But I thought that everybody had a copy machine. That solves the whole problem. (Interrupted by murmers of "no," and "no, it doesn't.") When we give our reporters a file, they automatically go to the copy machine, make copies of the things they want and put the file back exactly where it was. There's no problem. There's no nosing around through the clips. I just don't see what this is all about. Expensive? With all that money they're spending on cold-type and everything!

Joyce Mott, New Brunswick (N.J.) Home News:

How many do not have a copy machine in the library or in the city room?

Joseph McCarthy: You mean you don't have any in the whole building?

Joyce Mott: I mean, I do not have one close enough for the library to use. I've been trying to convince the executive editor for five years that there should be a copy machine in the city room. So this (a show of hands) is maybe two-thirds to one-third.

Helen Everts, Lancaster (Pa.) Newspapers:

My boss wants to do a story for a seminar on this question: "Do you allow the public to come in and sit down at a reference table and go through your clips?" Is that going to be covered by this panel?

Joseph McCarthy: No, this discussion has nothing to do with the public. That's a separate subject, and we covered that pretty well last year in Pittsburgh. Jim Scofield had a session on the public use of newspaper libraries. I don't know whether you were there last year or not.

Helen Everts: All I wanted to ask for was a show of hands by anybody who allows the public to use their clips.

Joseph McCarthy: All right. (No indication as to how many raised their hands, but later talk with Helen Everts indicated it was only nine who had totally closed files.)

Ernest Perez: Helen, order the transcript of that session from ANPA. I showed it to my managing editor and editor-in-chief. We were open 40 hours a week to the public. We are now open 12 hours a week. The transcript gives you examples of all the libraries that are not open to the public.

Joseph McCarthy: Anyone else?

Geoffrey Fingland: Yes, I think it's useful to point out that when you have a closed library you can also have the reporters come right in. In our library, they are not allowed to touch the Lektrievers or get anything out of them. They come in and as you get the clips for them they stand over your shoulder. Then you give them the envelope and they go through it and say, "Yes, this is one of the envelopes I want." Then we say, "What else are you thinking of?" And you quiz them a little bit more, and give them another envelope. So there is tremendous cooperation between the library and the reporters.

Quite often after you've given them the clips and they have gone to their desks, they'll call back on the phone and say, "I'm not quite getting the information I want. Could you come and talk to me?" We go out and talk to them and quiz them to make absolutely sure that they are getting the information they want. Closing library files doesn't break that absolutely essential communication between the library and the reporter. You can keep that up with closed files.

Gayle Thompson: I'd like to know what you do with photo files. We have a serious problem with them. Once again, we use a voluntary signout system, but the entire folder is constantly signed out and it comes back minus all of the contents. A picture goes down to engraving and comes up the next day; then about four weeks later a couple more pictures dribble in from the news area. I wanted to know what you do with your photo files.

Joseph McCarthy: Well, I'll tell you what we do with ours. We let the whole folder go out. Reporters, by the way, do not need photo files. Our art department and caption writers do. Reporters very rarely call for photo files unless they are just interested in looking at a few pictures. I can't remember the last time a reporter asked for a photo file in my library.

We don't count the pictures in the folder. When the folder goes out to the art department, we trust that they are just going to remove what they want for that edition. Then they put the folder into the return box, and it's picked up later in the day. Now the ones that they picked out to use are not going to come back with that folder. They will come back with the edition pictures the next morning. I suppose that a few pictures of Marilyn Monroe might get lost or stolen in a process like that.

Before copying machines, someone might have stuck a clipping or two in his pocket-there's no way of checking that. But there's no need to do it anymore. Reporters have free use of the copy machine. If they want to take something home with them, or take it with them on assignment, they make copies. They don't even have to make the copies themselves; a copy clerk will do it for them.

Gayle Thompson: I'm talking about the whole file.

Joseph McCarthy: The whole file? I can't remember the last time we lost a complete file of anything. As I've said, maybe we have an honest staff. But you see our problem is we have such a huge city room staff--1,000 people--if they were allowed free access into the library, where the hell would you put them, for one thing? We just couldn't do it.

They take care of the things they borrow because they have come to know over the years that the material may be important to them later on. So they put it back. We don't lose files. We just don't. We may lose an individual picture or two once in a while, but as I've said, the people are quite honest.

Now they may steal nude photos--you know, a picture of some movie actress without a brassiere on or something like that. But they don't have to do that. If they want a copy for their own pornographic reasons, they can just walk into the studio and ask to have a copy made and they'll get it. There's no need to steal it. We may have lost a picture or two, but we haven't lost a complete file as long as I can remember.

Anybody else?

Questionner: I have a question on microfilming. A lot of newspapers are experimenting with microfilm both for storage reduction and file security. I just want to know if anyone can tell us whether the jacket or the clipping the reporter gets is a duplicate copy. If so, what is the reaction of the reporter to fiche?

Joseph McCarthy: You're interested because you want to sell microfiche, but O.K. We started microfilming on my paper a couple of years ago. We do our own filming using the Bell & Howell Filemaster System. Of course, we don't microfilm current clippings. All we are doing now is the old material which is not used very much. I have now on microfiche all of President Truman's and President Roosevelt's clippings, and clippings about people like MacArthur and such things as the Daily News promotions.

Now, these files aren't used very much. But they were too valuable to just throw away. Every once in a while some staffer does want something from these files. It's very simple to make a diazo copy, and they can look at it on a reader in the city room. Or, if they want to, they can come in to the library to use the microfiche file. My microfiche file is in a separate little room with a desk, a chair, a reader and so on. They can use it right there. There have been no complaints at all on that because, as I've said, it's mostly old clippings that are not really deadline material. It's primarily material that is used by feature writers--and they have all week to do a story. Now if the writer wants to--since we have a reader-printer there--he can make a copy of anything and take it out to his desk. Or if he prefers, he can just sit there and look at the film on the reader. There have been no complaints at all. They like it.

I've found too--because I use microfiche quite often myself to look for feature material--that it's much easier to look at a strip of microfiche than to unfold clippings, especially old clippings that tend to fall apart. We have unfilmed clips going back to the 1920's, and when you start opening them they fall apart even when you handle them very carefully. It's easy to take any file you want, run it through the reader, and pick out the items. We like it.

Ernest Perez: On that, our filming is done strictly for space reasons. On big files--those on which you get a lot of stuff such as "NIXON, WATERGATE," "TEXAS STATE LEGISLATURE, CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION"--I have clippings as recent as two months ago on film. It's on positive microfiche. We have two readers by the files with typewriters and telephones for reporters, and we have one more out in front in the library. It's very bulky if the library keeps the large files in hard copy. For the reporters, it's on positive film, first of all--Kalvar positive--and second, it's date-arranged and unfolded, so they don't have to hassle themselves about a copy. All they have to do is mark down the fiche number and the frame number and we'll copy it for them on the way out.

Questionner: Do you give them a copy of the fiche?

Ernest Perez: No, a Xerox copy, Xerox off the fiche.

Joseph McCarthy: Anyone else? No? Then thank you.